



California State Parks

Quick Facts



Last updated 1/23/2007

What's In a Park?

- There are 278 classified and unclassified units in the California State Park System. Classifications and the number of units in each are as follows:

▪ State Beach	64
▪ State Historical Monument	1
▪ State Historic Park	50
▪ State Park	84
▪ State Recreation Area	32
▪ State Reserve	17
▪ State Seashore	1
▪ State Vehicular Recreation Area	8
▪ Wayside Campground	1
▪ Unclassified properties	20

- These units are organized into 23 districts including the five districts of the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division.
- 31 state park units are operated by other governmental entities for California State Parks.
- California State Parks include: beaches, forests, marshes, underwater areas, lakes, reservoirs, streams, rivers, off-highway vehicle areas, deserts, golf courses, sand dunes, meadows, and much more.
- California State Parks contain a wide variety of cultural resources. California was originally home to the widest diversity of cultures and languages anywhere in the United States. With the influx of many national and ethnic groups after contact between the California Indians and Europeans and during the Gold Rush, this diversity was expanded and enhanced. Representations of the diversity of people in the state are reflected in traditional tribal buildings, historic structures and communities, prehistoric archaeological sites and cultural landscapes.
- A wide variety of collections are housed at California State Parks. They include natural history collections, ethnographic collections and artifacts from all time periods. California State Parks is responsible for 1 million museum objects, more than 3 million archival documents and 2 million archaeological specimens. Farming equipment, botanical specimens, tapestries, Californian basketry, wagons or all types, stone tools, and fine art can all be found in park collections.



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- Many items are on display, while others are held in storage for study or future exhibits.
- California State Parks is responsible for the documentation, preservation and care of 10,232 known prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, 3,194 historic buildings, a recreated Yurok village site, two traditional Miwok roundhouses, numerous light stations, cemeteries, roads and trails, houses of worship (alphabetically from Buddhist to Taoist), theaters and early recreation sites. The full scope of human activities is reflected in our park units.
 - Hearst San Simeon SHM contains 165 rooms and was toured by 677,394 visitors in 2005/06. Five different tours are currently offered.
 - California's geologic features, natural habitats, and a wide variety of native plants and animals are well represented and protected in California State Parks.
 - 37% of the state and federally listed rare, threatened or endangered species can be found in California State Parks.
 - California State Parks has major units within all of the state's ecoregions and geomorphic provinces.
 - The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, located primarily in Anza Borrego Desert State Park, was the first of five National Historic Trails dedicated in the United States in 1990. It was elevated to National Millennium Trail status in 1999.
 - The nationally recognized Pacific Crest Trail passes through 5 California State Park units. From north to south, they are: Castle Crags State Park, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park, Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area, Mt. San Jacinto State Park, and Anza Borrego Desert State Park.
 - The first operating weather station in the 11 western states is located at Fort Ross State Historic Park.
 - The 125 coastal units of the California State Park System provide access to over a quarter (29.2%) of California's 1,100 mile long coastline, half of which is sandy beach. The coastal units encompass half of the total coastal land in California open to the public
 - California State Parks administers 11.6% (150,943 acres) of California's Coastal Zone, making it – with the possible exception of the federal government – the largest single land holder on the Coast.